LONDON ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL

Studying in London provides a uniquely rewarding dimension to your graduate studies. A vast array of academic resources, cultural riches and social opportunities await you, together with the benefits of access to the professional and international networks enjoyed by a capital city which plays a significant role on the world stage.

Academic links and collaborations

UCL’s academic departments cultivate mutually beneficial links and partnerships with research institutions, professional bodies and employers. Such links extend internationally, nationally and locally, since London is home to a significant concentration of such organisations. In many subjects London and its resources are drawn upon as a topic for investigation or to illustrate issues under discussion.

Subject entries in this Prospectus provide information on the special associations UCL academic departments have with organisations and institutions in London. Through the Centre for Ecology and Evolution, UCL staff in life, medical and environmental science disciplines work with staff at the Institute of Zoology, located at London Zoo in Regent’s Park, and the Natural History Museum. The many museums and galleries of London provide students of history, archaeology and history of art with access to the objects, artefacts and works being studied.

Expansion, redevelopment and construction works are taking place all over London, with major projects including the creation of the 560-acre Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (due to open in phases from July 2013), and the construction of Crossrail, a 74-mile stretch of railway connecting the capital to commuter areas east and west of London, due to open to passenger services in 2017. These activities provide fascinating case studies for students in fields such as geography, civil engineering, architecture and planning.

In subjects such as architecture and law, practising professionals provide teaching and guest lectures, and being a political science or law student in London means you are able to observe your subjects in action from the public galleries of the Houses of Parliament, Royal Courts of Justice and the Central Criminal Court (Old Bailey). Your tutor or supervisor, together with your own curiosity, will help you identify the resources of most relevance and interest to you. Outlined here, by way of introduction, are just some of the many facilities and resources available.

Elizabeth Pompa
Clinical and Public Health Nutrition MSc

I chose UCL for my postgraduate studies because of its excellent academic and teaching resources, which is reflected in its ranking of universities worldwide. This allowed me to secure funding for my studies. In addition, UCL provides you with access to many opportunities to network and to meet leading experts in your field of study, making this an invaluable opportunity to advance your academic studies and broaden your career opportunities.

As an international student, this experience has been rewarding but also challenging at times because of the need to adjust to a new country and culture, as well as the academic structure of the MSc. However, I could rely on my tutors and supervisors regarding any academic questions or issues I might have had, and, since London is such a multi-cultural city, this also means that often you meet people from similar cultural backgrounds, who can help make the transition to a new country easier.

The advantage of living in London and UCL being so centrally located means many cultural and social activities are within easy reach. Museums and art galleries including the British Museum and the National Gallery are both free and close to UCL, with many restaurants, coffee shops and retail shops also nearby. I particularly enjoyed seeing plays and musicals being performed at West End theatres. UCL also offers many diverse societies to join, I was particularly interested in the dance society. The UCL Students’ Union also organises many events and trips that allow you to explore London landmarks and nearby cities.
Libraries and archives

In addition to the UCL Library, you will also have access to the University of London Research Library Services, including the Senate House Library and the specialist libraries of the institutes of the School of Advanced Study. The British Library is only a ten-minute walk from UCL’s Bloomsbury campus; it holds more than 150 million items, including books, manuscripts, maps, newspapers, magazines, prints and drawings, music scores and sound recordings, and provides a specialist service for academic researchers.

London is also home to many specialist libraries and archives, including the National Archives at Kew and the London Metropolitan Archives. In these collections you can access unique and detailed materials relevant to an enormous range of interests, from the history of medicine to slavery and child labour, British film, art and architecture to psychoanalysis, to name but a few.

Museums and galleries

Many nationally and internationally renowned collections are housed in London’s famous museums and galleries, which include the British Museum, Science Museum, Natural History Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Modern and Tate Britain galleries. UCL maintains good relations with many of London’s museums and galleries, and their collections form a resource for research across a range of fields, as well as professional insights for students undertaking degrees in museum and heritage studies, and conservation. Of course, the exhibits and collections are also open to the public for general interest.

Professional institutions and societies

Many of the UK’s professional societies and institutions have their headquarters in London; examples include the Bar Council, British Medical Association, Royal Academy of Engineering, Royal Institute of British Architects, Royal Town Planning Institute, Royal Historical Society and Royal Geographical Society. Each offers services and support to professionals within its own field, but may be slightly different in its operation and administration. In general, however, these institutions can provide opportunities to attend lectures, debates and events, to meet with prospective employers, and to access specialised library resources.